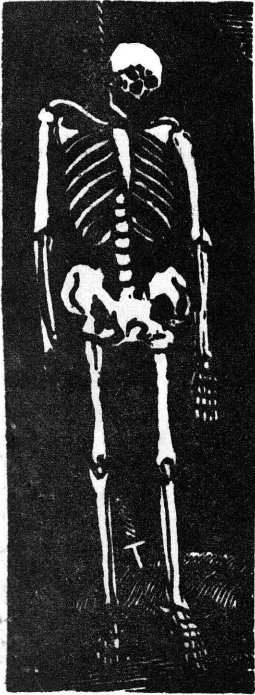


no:2



ARTIFICIAL LIFE

SOME THINGS MATTER! SEPT 82 NO 2



★★★
ABC

**SEX GANG
CHILDREN**

NEW ORDER

MARK

xtc

STEWART

amazulu

the room



only
30p

YOUR CAPTAIN IS DEAD

Well, we've made it to issue 2! Sales of issue 1 went quite well, but the feedback (letters, etc) wasn't exactly overwhelming -- apathetic bunch! We'd like to thank everyone in the music business who promised to ring us and who didn't. It just confirms our belief that the music biz is run by money grabbers.

One of the criticisms of ARTIFICIAL LIFE has been the lack of views put forward by us. Well the fanzine is about music and the group's viewpoints and not whether we think punk is alive or dead etc.

One of the most annoying things while selling the fanzine has been the people who wear T-shirts and badges of bands featured and won't buy a fanzine. It seems there are more people into posing than being interested in the music.

Hopefully this issue provides a variety of bands so that people who like one type of music will become aware of other types of music. Just because it's not 'hip' doesn't mean to say you can't like it!

Thanks to the bands that offer hope.

ARTIFICIAL LIFE: SEPT. 1982
BASEMENT FLAT
37A HILLDROP ROAD
LONDON, N7 0JE

Some copies of issue 1 still available featuring THEATRE OF HATE... SOUTHERN DEATH CULT... GENE LOVES JEZEBEL.... MARINE GIRLS.... PINSKI ZOO... THE ALARM.. XENA ZEROX.... and MORE

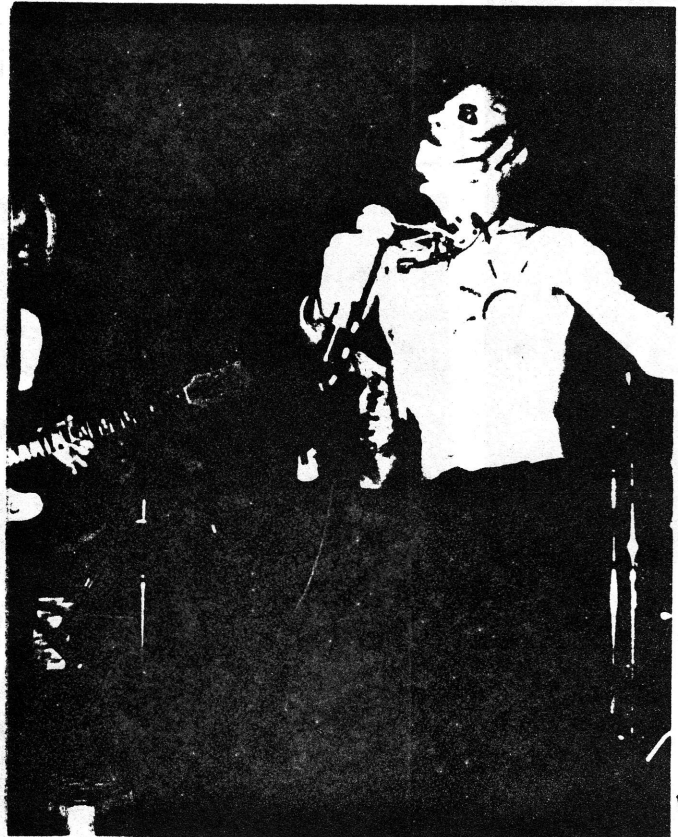
(50p including postage & packing)



STOP PRESS : SOUTHERN DEATH CULT

The new single "Fatman/Moya" will be released in October, probably on the band's own label but definitely not on Burning Rome. Look out for the single as it's going to be excellent!

KEEP THE FAITH!



IAN OF SDC

RECORD REVIEWS !

CARMEI: "Mini LP (Red Flame)"

The wonderful voice of Carmei, a white girl with a black voice and minimal backing is finally put on a mini six track album retailing at £2.99.

Those of you who have experienced her atmospheric performances will be pleased by the album which includes her stage favourites; 'Tracks of my Tears', 'Sugar Daddy' and a live version of 'Storm' recorded at Hammersmith Palais.

If you're unfamiliar with Carmei then this record is a good introduction to one hell of a singer!

TONY: "Apocalypse (Jamming)"

Well this is half a review as the record reached me, broken in half. Apocalypse include the hyperactive Tony Fletcher of Jamming fanzine who should be an inspiration to all fanzines. He works hard and I'm sure the record isn't half bad... It's produced by Paul Weller, which isn't half bad, is it?

NEW ORDER



Out of the ashes of Joy Division came New Order who from the opening bars of 'Ceremony' to the end of 'Temptation' have continued with their magical music to surprise and inspire many people. They were always great but now stand close to being brilliant!

By refusing to give interviews to the music press the band have remained mysterious, which has resulted in the likes of the NME's Paul Morley ranting on in his self-indulgent style of writing about the band. However by the end of the day he is never sure so he re-assesses them by writing again and again...Well, some of us have never doubted how great they are!

Artificial Life decided to send the band a questionnaire, the results of which appeared several months later.

AL: Was it difficult to carry on after Joy Division? Do you think people expected too much of you?

NEW ORDER: No...No...

AL: Gillian, what did you do before the band?

GILLIAN: School, college.

AL: Were you always there?

GILLIAN: Yes...I've always been here.

AL: Some people seem to have expected more from the album; Were you happy with it?

NEW ORDER: We were happy with the songs but not all happy with the production.

AL: You seem to play at random and usually at obscure venues; How important do you consider gigs to be?

NEW ORDER: We think playing concerts is important as long as it doesn't become boring.

AL: How much planning goes into the artwork? Is it a policy of Factory?

NEW ORDER: Quite a lot of thought goes into the sleeves and Factory like to do nice sleeves too.

AL: What's the reasoning behind releasing the different mixes?

NEW ORDER: There are many different reasons but the main one is that we like to do it.

AL: Why do you think so many people want to see you and yet you manage to keep out of the public eye?

NEW ORDER: Luck.

AL: 'Temptation' went quite high in the charts...Do you study the charts?

NEW ORDER: Yes we look at the charts but don't place too much importance on them.

AL: 'Temptation' seemed to be a change of direction and more commercial. Was this intentional?

NEW ORDER: No. 'Temptation' is just another song.

AL: Why did you produce 'Temptation' yourselves?

NEW ORDER: We think we can get the sound we want better ourselves.

AL: Will you use Martin Hannet as producer again?

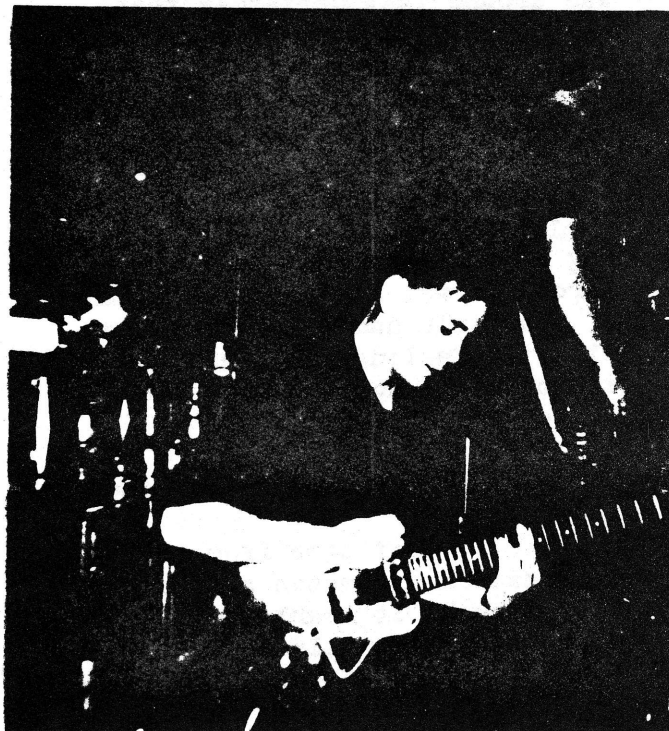
NEW ORDER: Who knows?

AL: Why do you avoid talking to the music press?

NEW ORDER: Some of us like doing interviews...some of us don't...Reasons vary.

AL: Where do you see New Order going from here?

NEW ORDER: Continuing?



A M A Z U L U

The pulsating reggae rhythms of Amazulu can currently be experienced and enjoyed around London clubs and other parts of the country via support slots with bands such as the Clash. However, the band won't be playing the clubs for long as already the record companies are interested in signing the six piece female band who seem destined for big things.

Although reggae might not be the most original of music, Amazulu are trying to bring it to a much wider audience, which has perhaps never really been achieved.

The line-up consists of Rose on vocals, Lesley on saxophone, Clare on bass, Margo on guitar, Sharon on percussion and drummer Debbie.

'Artificial Life' talked to Margo to find out more about the band.....



AL: How did the band form?

MARGO: It started with Rose and Lesley who were playing with some other people, which didn't work out. It was around last Christmas that Lesley had the idea of playing authentic reggae with something different on top and slightly different vocal style and played by an all girl band. It was through various contacts that the rest of us joined and we played our first gig at the Hope and Anchor in March. It was the first time many of the girls had played live and with the feelings of panic and innocence it sounded good and the audience liked us.

AL: Where did the name 'Amazulu' come from?

MARGO: I believe it came from the combination of Amazon and Zulu. They thought it meant something else but it actually means the land of the Zulu.

AL: At the moment you're without a manager...Is that right?

MARGO: Yes, Sharon was our manager but she started playing percussion in our practices so she became a member of the group. At the moment we have to make decisions on how the group should function, sometimes very quickly because since our third or fourth gig we've had record companies interested in us.

AL: Do you intend to have a manager?

MARGO: Yes, I think we need one as it is too much having to play the music and run the band day to day, negotiating record contracts etc. Also the band consists of strong individuals and sometimes you need an arbitrator.

AL: Who writes the songs in the band?

MARGO: Well I write some of the songs and Rose does, the rest of the group are now starting to write. A lot of the songs we do in the set are covers of obscure reggae records. The idea of the band is to work on existing songs and basslines so that we can learn about playing by drawing from tradition. Every band starts in the same way and a lot of reggae is based on the same basslines. It's certainly given me a better understanding and I've found my own interpretation of reggae.

AL: Will you at some point use all your own material?

MARGO: Yes, we would like to do more of our own material as it's more satisfying writing and arranging your own songs. Also there's more money to be made from publishing.

AL: What musical influences do you have?

MARGO: Well, my record collection is quite diverse...pop music, jazz, Latin American, classical, new-wave, ethnic music etc. I like the idea of our band trying to bring reggae to an audience that don't normally like reggae.

AL: Don't you think that it's been tried before?

MARGO: It's been tried but nobody has got it right. The Police tried but their bass and drums weren't reggae enough. The Clash are not melodious enough...They don't have the harmonies and soul.

AL: What do you think of the British reggae scene?

MARGO: Lately it's got kind of stale.

The only band I've enjoyed lately has been Rico's band and

they were doing bluebeat, jazz R'n' B which wasn't strictly reggae I don't really like the 'stoned out of it' attitude but I admire people who play with conviction and passion. There is a danger in reggae of once you get the confidence to play it, you get into a slick sound. I think we have a slightly punk feel which makes us different from straight ahead reggae.

AL: The songs that you write seem to be political, in the sense of politics of every day life ...

MARGO: Well we don't try to preach, but some of our songs have come out like that...For instance, the song 'Amazulu' is about the role of women playing reggae and that more women should get into it. There's also an element of humour in it and we do try to balance humour and being down to Earth. We've got one song called 'Tonto' which is a wild west song done to reggae.

AL: What are the sentiments expressed in the song 'Brixton'?

MARGO: It's talking about the situation that went on last year and how a situation has been allowed to develop. It's not trying to present any solutions but asking what's to be done about it.

AL: How do you feel you're treated as you're a female band?

MARGO: I think attitudes have changed over the last couple of years. We're all strong intelligent women and we're not young so is able to get the better of us. When we are playing live, people are curious for the first couple of minutes but then they just get into the music.

AL: Finally, what are Amazulu trying to achieve through their music?

MARGO: We're trying to gain recognition for reggae which is a form of music that could be enjoyed by everybody. We're also trying to achieve our own personal ideas and what constitutes good musicianship. We would like to make a living from it!



ABC ★
★
★

OVER

ABC ★ ★ ★

Every reader will be aware of the success of Sheffield based ABC, but not everyone will appreciate the craft and work put into the four singles and debut album. Each single is geared toward being a 'hit' due to the great production of Trevor Horn (except 'Tears' which was produced by Steve Brown) and perfection in sound of each instrument. The result is that the singles are a class above the usual dross filling the charts.

The present line-up consists of Martin Fry on vocals, Steve Singleton on saxophone, Mark White on guitar and Dave Palmer on drums. Artificial Life asked Steve Singleton, whose sax playing is essential to the sound of ABC, some questions....

AL: Could you tell us a bit about the history of the band?

STEVE: I met Mark in the Crazy Daisy disco in 1977 and formed a short lived group with two other people. We then formed Vice-Versa in '78 and were interviewed by Martin Fry for his magazine, which resulted in his joining. We grew tired of purely electronic music, so in 1980 formed ABC and met David in '81.

AL: Do you write as a group or as individuals?

STEVE: We write as individuals, then pool ideas, rough drafts etc to make up songs as a band.

AL: The lyrics of ABC songs tend to be geared toward love and relationships etc. Are these lyrics inspired by experiences or just attitudes and feelings?

STEVE: All the lyrics are from our experiences and are our attitudes and feelings about our experiences.

AL: What influences do the band have, musical or otherwise?

STEVE: Magazines, books, memorabilia, people, funny Dada situations, musical and lyrical ideas, T.V., films, Photos, toys, girls, food, trinkets, love of life, love of love and at this moment the new Orange Juice single.

AL: Each single seems geared to be a hit record-How much planning goes into each song?

STEVE: Whether our songs sell well or not isn't really up to us. All we do is make records that we are proud of and believe in.

AL: Why did the group decide to use Trevor Horn as producer?

STEVE: Trevor is our good friend and understands the need to do something that's not second best.

AL: Have you got any plans to play live?

STEVE: We are embarking on a five month world tour starting in November.

AL: What do you think of the music now in the charts?

STEVE: Most music in the charts is rubbish! I hate it! There are good records but I think that 90 percent of the records are rubbish and 10 percent or maybe less, are good.

AL: What plans do you have for Neutron Records Ltd?

STEVE: Heavy profits and records to be one stage only.

AL: What do you feel you are trying to achieve through your music?

STEVE: Respect.

AL: What are your immediate plans for the future?

STEVE: Designing the stage set and rehearsing for the tour.



SEX-GANG CHILDREN

The Sex Gang Children are another of the new bands taking London by storm with their raw, powerful music, full of intensity and aggression. The band want people to think for themselves and thus be individuals—Through their music, the Sex Gang Children are making people aware!

The line-up consists of Andy Hayward on vocals, Terry Mackay on guitar, Dave Roberts on bass and drummer Robert Stroud. Artificial Life talked to the band before their set at the ZigZag club supporting U.K. Decay. The band were friendly, talkative and interesting.

AL: How did the group form?

ANDY: Well, Robert and I were in Panic Button and we found the group were too easy-going and too normal. It had become well-worn and tame. The name 'Panic' was just a punk cliché. We decided to form a new band so advertised in Melody Maker resulting in Dave and Terry joining.



AL: Why the name 'Sex Gang Children'?

ANDY: The name conjures up wild youth running through the streets, wild and proud!

TERRY: It's a very proud name!

ANDY: It makes you feel good!

TERRY: It gives us an identity like a gang screaming at each other.

AL: Are there any bands who influence your writing?

ANDY: No, it just comes naturally. We don't write words for the sake of it... Our influences are natural. Although when I heard U.K. Decay I realised that we were similar to them. U.K. Decay were the forefront of a movement but they never got recognised.

AL: Do you feel that there's something happening at the moment in London?

DAVE: Yes, there are lots of new bands around waiting to burst open. These bands, like us, are part of a new movement... Ritual, Actifed and Dance Society... A few others.



AL: Do any of the bigger bands have any influence?

ANDY: Well, I like Siouxsie and the Banshees for what they put into their songs but I could never be the same as them. Lyrically I'm closer to Leonard Cohen.

AL: Don't you find his songs depress - ing?

ANDY: No, I find him very uplifting. I saw him when I was about fifteen.. He oozes energy, he doesn't spurt it. His lyrics are quite optimistic and sarcastic but people don't realise it.

DAVE: His music is schizo music! Our music has been compared to early Adam and the Ants, but our music isn't really like that.

AL: What do you think of 'punk' bands such as the Anti-Nowhere League?

DAVE: They're terrible... Their album covers are just like heavy-metal album covers!

AL: As long as people ignore them and concentrate on the real bands, things will get better.

ROB: Yeah... they're not filling places anymore.

TERRY: The people who like them don't know the alternative.

ANDY: They read about punk in The Sun and then go to the gigs they're told to go to! I was reading an article that said the Anti-Nowhere League made the Sex Pistols look like old grannies! What a terrible thing to say! The Pistols were so raw but at the same time the lyric were articulate unlike groups like The Exploited.

AL: Do you consider yourselves to be a punk band?

TERRY: Yes... in the true sense of the old days, but we're taking our own direction.

ANDY: We're punk's bastard offspring!

AL: You recently released a cassette 'Naked' which seems quite popular and is selling well. How many have you sold?

ROB: A couple of hundred.

AL: It's very hard to get.

ROB: Everybody says that, there aren't many left!

DAVE: Before we can produce any more we need to be paid by Rough Trade.

AL: Haven't you just signed to Illuminated Records and are bringing out a 12" single?

ANDY: Yes, we wanted to bring out a multi-track record but didn't think we'd be able to do it. We were really pleased when Illuminated suggested it.

AL: If the choice arose, would you sign to a major or would you stay independent?

ANDY: I'd like to stay with Illuminated as it's a much closer relationship.

AL: What are your immediate plans?

ROB: Well, we've just got a publishing deal. We want to do lots of gigs... even a tour but it would be a selective one and in our own time! We like to make every gig an event.

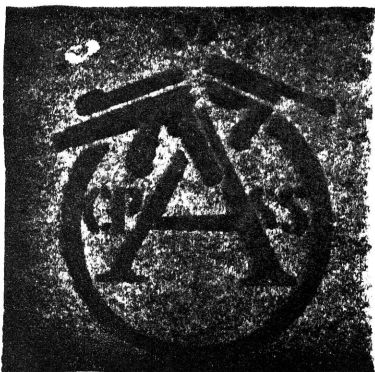
TERRY: When I go to see a band I want to see them put everything into their performance. You can't do it when you're playing every night up and down the country. Groups are no good when they're too tired or on coke! Therefore we wouldn't do a lengthy tour as we want to give one hundred percent every gig!

AL: What do the Sex Gang Children aim to achieve?

ANDY: There are few bands taking risks. We offer an alternative to the so-called alternative.

* STRAPLESS BEASTS 12" SINGLE RECORDED
A FIVE DEBUT SINGLE FEATURING FOUR
CLASSIC TRACKS - BEASTS (ANIMAL QUEEN)
TIMES OF OUR LIVES, SENSE OF ELATION & MISS
AT YOUR PERIL





CRASS



Some people love them, others hate while a lot of people just wish they'd go away. Well, CRASS are not going to go away... They're here to confront the whole of our so-called 'society'. Crass provoke people into thinking and make them aware of the society in which they live.

CRASS don't need the music industry as they bring out records themselves cheaper than any other label, which shows how much profit companies are making by charging extortionate prices. The new boxed set containing a double album, a poster and twenty-eight page booklet is the most essential record of the year and everyone should pay the £5 for it.

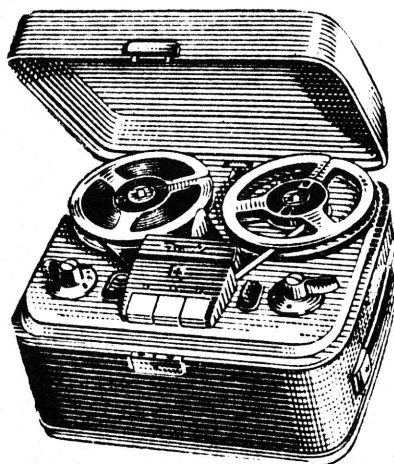
Their music is raw punk, which to many people is loud and aggressive, so suggests Crass are aggressive people... Well, they're not! The reason that the music is played that way is because they're a PUNK band. The reason the sentiments are expressed in such a way is because they have a genuine feeling and compassion about the subjects covered in their songs.

Artificial Life decided to find out more about Crass and was invited to meet them and find out more about their ideas.

AL: At the time the band formed there were a lot of people with similar ideas... How did the band come together?

CRASS: There were a lot of people saying 'do-it-yourself' and that anyone can do it... so we thought if the Clash can do it then we can do it better. Also the fact of actually rejecting all of what society was saying appealed to some of us who, although had been in bands before, hadn't had the chance of voicing their opinions this way, which when it happened was really exciting.

AL: Do you think you started with similar intentions of other bands such as the Clash?



CRASS: It is hard to say, we assumed The Clash were saying similar things to us but nobody knows what they were really thinking. The Clash may have been genuine with their feelings but the music industry is very heavy and temptations are great, resulting in bands being watered down by the system.

AL: Was it from watching the other punk bands sign to major record companies that you were able to stay clear?

CRASS: No, we're much older and most of us had worked in publications and shows before punk. We knew what we wanted and more to the point what we didn't want, which was the music scene. With the things we say we couldn't be on a major label... It's a contradiction! You can't say we don't want a bomb if you support a record company that's producing one.

A lot of us in the band have been through the hippy era of the 60's and knew the pitfalls from a long way off. For instance there's no point in doing an interview with a major music paper as there's no way they're going to let you say what you want and leave it at that. All the people in the music business are just interested in money rather than people resulting in many young people being done by it and still they continue to do so. Obviously it's a great temptation... a couple of thousand pounds, especially if you've never had money or a job before. Many people don't see the traps of the music business while others feel they can beat the system from being inside the system but you can't!

AL: Do you ever have any disagreements over which policies to follow?

CRASS: We don't have any fixed policies. We have differences of opinions but we have a common ground to work on which means if something turns up we discuss it; For example whether we

should play a gig. If one person feels strongly then it will be dropped... but the general feeling is to trust others.

One of the things we get is people ringing up and wanting to know the gigs we're doing for the next year... which is ridiculous but one of the traps that other bands have fallen into. You become the record company's product and they promise you wealth and fortune. What they don't tell you is that you won't be able to put out 90 percent of what you want and that you end up paying back all the advance money. The record company will make your image and tell you what to sing about.

AL: When do you decide you want to play gigs?

CRASS: On our news-sheet we asked people that if there is somewhere they feel is suitable to play near them, to contact us and then we'll see if we can set it up. We select a time for gigs then try and set up a coherent tour.

AL: Why don't you play London anymore?

CRASS: Because we can't! In London we'd attract 1500 people or more and you can't get a venue that holds that many people that isn't held up by a commercial concern, for example the Lyceum. In most large towns there is at least one council hall which isn't run by a commercial concern where we can play, but in London there are too many restrictions on such halls. At Xmas we played a lot of small gigs under a different name.

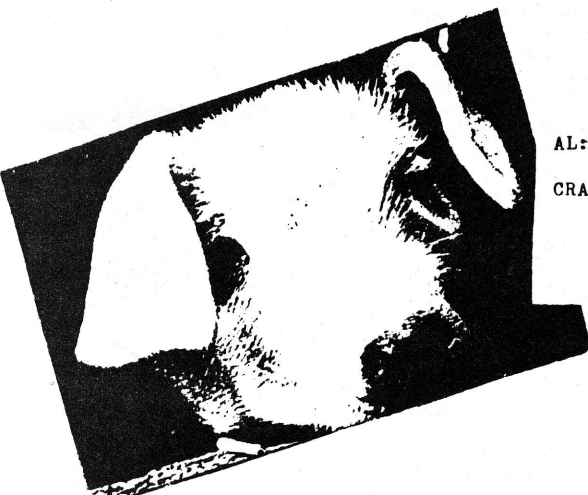
AL: Don't you think it's a shame playing under a different name as people might miss you?

CRASS: Yes in a way but the Xmas gigs were equally if not more effective. By playing smaller venues it gives us the space to move beyond what's expected of us which is playing larger venues, which we don't really like doing as you don't get a chance to meet people. By meeting people

'This one is incredible and rather boring... next week I'll probab

YOU'

62 Sex is used to sell all sorts from books to aeroplanes — is it being used to promote videos?



and them meeting us they realise that our's isn't an aggressive and violent stance but an angry, and compassionate one.

When we started, it was just a band on stage but we blew that as we didn't wear the right clothes or did what was expected of us and people were no longer confronted by that so we introduced more visual stuff which is now expected of us. Also putting out cheap records became an expectation so we released the £5 boxed set which is the most expensive Crass record, so now it's a question of pushing ourselves further in our gigs and presentation so that we are confronting and not doing what is expected of us. Everything we try and do is an expansion of ourselves and those who might listen to it.

AL: What are your present plans?

CRASS: We've got some gigs coming up in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and the South West and we're planning what we're going to do on those dates. We're doing a single which we'll be recording in a couple of weeks. It's all a question of pushing ourselves and doing something which isn't expected... People tend to become contented. People will go to a gig and see the shit kicked out of someone, yet won't do anything as most gigs are channelled to that response but in one of our gigs their would be a confrontation with such an incident. Our problem as a band is not to be just confronting in terms of information but to break the idea of channelled response.

The channelled response to what we do is to categorise. We are the name band in the category 'Crass type bands', consisting of people with Crass type integrity who play music about 'Crass type subjects'.

We've got to try and push things as it would be so easy to say we created an image and we could make a lot of money and sell a lot of records. Well, we're not fucking interested in that and we're not interested in settling down and being a good professional band and making a living from records. If the record business collapsed it wouldn't make any difference to us, it would be more difficult but we'd carry on doing it whether we sold one record or a million. There's no reason for us to be tempted by top ten sales as we live in a way which suits us and we put out stuff which is actually saying something

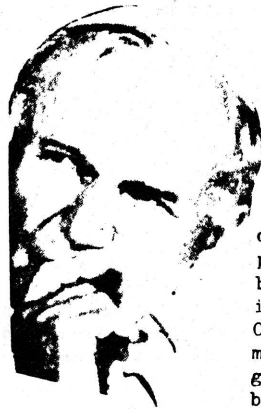


AL: What is the basis for releasing records by other bands on your label
CRASS: We use the Crass label as a facility to show people how to put out records. The one-off thing on 'Crass' can give people a small amount of money and knowledge so that they can do what they want, for example 'Flux of Pink Indians' formed their own label.

We also have another label which started up for bands to produce and do their own artwork. On 'Crass' records we help to produce the records but on 'Corpus Christi' we just act as a distribution and the finance. It's mainly for people who have had experience but who feel they were not able to say what they wanted. They will have freedom to say what they want so long as it isn't sexist, racist or violent.

AL: How do you feel about the merchandising of T-shirts etc using the name of Crass?

CRASS: We don't care! If people are prepared to go and spend £4 on a T-shirt or armband then they don't understand what we're saying. We



did at one time investigate the possibility of trying to stop it, but it is largely a cottage industry and very underground. Originally we'd write to the merchandisers who had designs giving them the proper designs but then they wanted us to design the T-shirts to make the authentic Crass T-shirts!

The way we're talking makes us sound perfect but we're not but through our beliefs we've been ripped-off, for example with the music papers we did think we could do something but now it's out of everybody's mind. Once every three weeks someone would ring us up offering us an interview on our terms so we'd talk to them on the 'phone... The next week it would be printed in the music papers as an exclusive!

AL: Why did you write to Sounds the last time?

CRASS: That was the last attempt to try and honestly do something because of aggression in the streets created by Bushell who had split people up. It was the last chance to say 'for fucksake, don't you realise what's happening?' He doesn't realise what's happening. He can't realise that one little punk might be set upon in the street. He wrote something about one of our songs '1980 bore' which is about television, saying that it was slagging off the 4-skins and their song '1984'. He hadn't even heard it and it resulted in a group of skinheads turning up at a gig and physically threatening us. We've got nothing against oi bands, they can carry on and if they want to do something with us then that would be great. It's just a total fabrication by

Into battle

An end to Falklands diplomacy, and a start to war, pages 25-28.



ture of that controversial pope, often accused of indifference towards the fate of Jews in Nazi Germany but who, it

FREE PRESS





For the chop one day

one person who got out of hand. It didn't work...They made three weeks copy out of one letter so that they could sell 20,000 copies of their shitty rag!

AL: Did you actually bring out the Falkland flexi and what did you think of the crisis?

CRASS: We'll never admit or deny it as the authorities are too interested. The Falklands crisis seems to have been forgotten but at the time of the crisis the actual fear and horror of this country was enormous. So many people were wound up and scared as they knew that it could have been the beginning of the third world war. Any international conflict could've been the start as America, Russia and China have got interests throughout the world and you can't do anything without cutting through their interests and situations like that are so dangerous.

The Falkland Islands were struggling on a death line economy and then this country says the Falklands are ours. It is estimated that to keep a garrison consisting of 3 times the population to be £1.8 billion which is enough to give each person on the island £1 million...and that's just in economic terms.... It's insane!

It cost 1,000 lives and then you hear the comments from the Falkland islanders..."Well, they took my false teeth" or "They put mud on my carpet"...That's their image of the war.

Of course people won't learn from it, maybe the people of the Falklands realised the barbarity of the situation. The Foreign Office won't release the figures as to how many people were actually crippled or affected mentally!

The fighting men aren't fighting for the same reasons as the power,

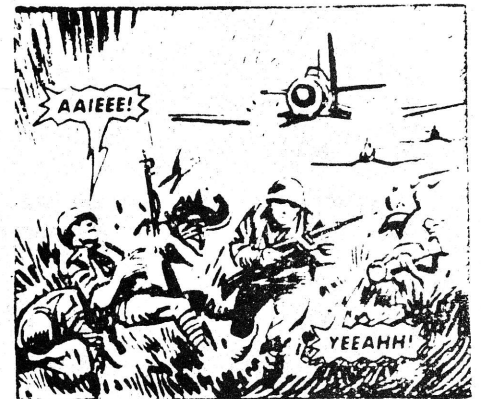
the people who have sent them to war. It's easy to convince the people who don't go to war how heroic it is and the soldiers who are out there and maybe scared have to do it and they believe they're fighting for freedom. The country is corrupt and controlled, a fascist state which everybody knows but won't admit because they need the stamp of authority. The idea of stepping outside of authority and society...It's easier to give in! Most people are enclosed by the media and presented with normality so to step out of line and to find your own values is supposedly wrong!

You get people who go on CND marches who then go home to sit and watch TV, without saying anything and eating meat...They don't connect that what they're doing, such as eating meat, is contributing to the bomb and represents all that aggression. What we try and do is to bring that imagery together with words and connect them so that people can have a better understanding.

AL: Do you think that Crass are opening people's eyes to what they should think or the alternatives open to them?

CRASS: You can do that by being really extreme...which we are. We supported CND 5 years ago and we were laughed at for having a CND banner at our gigs...They didn't even know what the symbol meant! We gave them a lot of support when nobody else did but we haven't had much to do with the London CND since it became big. There are some areas we're working in which will become commonplace in 3 or 4 years.

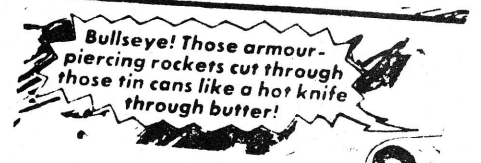
You can't expect someone who for example is going to the Falkland Islands to give up because it is wrong, although similar things have



happened...We've had letters from people in the army who can't get out but society has its limits, its creating space-if people didn't have people like us and others there wouldn't be any alternatives or people questioning things. We hope that people identify with it and that we give strength to people by saying what we say.

AL: You're making people aware, even if they don't agree they will think about it...Don't you agree?

CRASS: It provokes them to think. It does have an effect. For instance over the last eighteen months, people have been desperate for us not to sell out. It's naive but now it's obvious that we're not going to and there's no longer a fear by people of what has happened to so many other bands will happen to us.





THE ROOM



The Room are one of the most exciting bands to come out of Liverpool since the days of Echo & the Bunnymen and The Teardrop Explodes. The line up consists of Robyn Odlum on guitar, Clive Thomas on drums, Becky Stringer on bass and vocalist Dave Jackson.

After two singles and a cassette album "Bitter Reaction" on the Liverpool based Box, they were signed by Dave Kitson's Red Flame Records resulting in a single "Things Have Learnt To Walk That Ought To Crawl" and an album "Indoor Fireworks".

Their music is intense and exciting, working with rather than in, conventional forms, with soaring stuttering guitar, looping deceptive bass, crisp sharp drumming over which Dave Jackson sings fractured, emotional and passionate lyrics.

AL: How does the new album stand in comparison to the cassette "Bitter Reaction"?

Dave Jackson: It's totally different! It's much better. We don't play anything off the cassette now. You have to keep changing to keep your interest in it.

AL: Is your interest more important than the public's?

Dave: It goes hand in hand. The public are going to be more interested in seeing people who are excited by what they're doing and continually trying to get something off it, rather than someone running through a tired routine.

AL: A lot of bands seem to be running through a tired routine?

Dave: There are too many bands. The good stuff gets swamped. There's so much crap that you're fighting against. The independent scene has fallen as there are so many shitty bands on small labels.

AL: At the moment, something new and exciting is needed. How could you see yourselves fitting into something different with bass, guitar and drums?

Dave: We're planning on using another instrument such as a piano. We don't want to expand the sound but just **change** it around so that it becomes more exciting

AL: At the moment The Room are an independent label and able to guard their independence, but do you want to be part of the rock n roll mythology?

Dave: Not particularly, No!

AL: What happens if you have a hit single or album and this tour resulting in a vicious circle. How can you break out of it?

Dave: The industry is geared towards singles, LP's and tours, etc. If you're in a band, you're too involved in playing the music to try and breakdown the business side. A lot of bands start off with good intentions but writing the music is a full time job..... I mean very few attempts to breakdown the singles/albums things has worked, even Malcolm McLaren's cassette "Pet" didn't really take off!

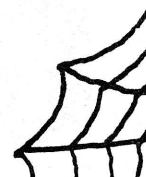
The release of "Indoor Fireworks" represents a milestone for The Room with the band moving away from the sparser and lyrically bleaker songs of "Bitter Reaction" to a fuller deeper sound. The angst and neurosis of former releases is still there, in the sombre brooding "In Sickness And In Health" and "Rewind" but they have undergone a subtle change.

AL: What are the new songs about?

Dave: It's hard to put them down, to say what they're about. They're more hopeful and optimistic but have the same sort of atmosphere as the older material.

AL: Do you have any musical influences?

Dave: The bands I like don't necessarily have any relation to what we play. I like Tom Waits, Dexys Midnight Runners and The Fall....



AL: You don't try and emulate anybody?

Dave: I don't see the point. It's a four way thing with each member writing their own part. If anybody had a particularly strong influence, it would be diluted by the others. With me it comes down to emotion and passion rather than atmosphere. I like pop songs. If you could combine that with a more experimental attitude, I think we are a very accessible band. I want to use a proper producer because it's the producer who makes the music accessible.

AL: A producer might make you lightweight and subsequently a "pop" band in the eyes of the music press?

Dave: I don't think that matters so long as it's good and comes from....

AL: The heart?!

Dave: Yeah, the heart, that cliché or whatever, but it doesn't matter what type of music it is, to a certain degree, the heavier aspect is becoming a bit tedious and is as much a cliché as a lightweight pop song.

The Room are above lightweight pop songs, they possess that certain edge that places them above the run of the mill romanticism or pure new pop. On stage Dave Jackson kindles emotion and nervous energy into his lyrics, flanked by the near-static Becky and Robyn, a strong steady beat overlaid by careering melodic guitar.

Last year The Room took their music to the U.S.A.

AL: How did the tour of the West Coast go?

Dave: It was o.k. We did sixteen days supporting The Fall and then headlined clubs the size of the Rock Garden. We played four nights in Vancouver, in this hole run by gangsters who had a strip joint downstairs and bands upstairs.

AL: How did you go down with audiences?

Dave: The American audiences were quite receptive.

AL: How do they compare to London audiences?

Dave: They dance more and are not very self conscious.



AL: In places such as The Venue the audience, to a certain degree, are there to pose and drink cocktails, unlike Liverpool.

Dave: I think you get it more in Liverpool as the audience are usually in bands themselves. It's hard to get any enthusiasm out of them. We're just starting to get decent reactions and good crowds in Liverpool.

AL: You didn't really play there for a long time did you?

Dave: It's the only way to do it. If you play too often they consider you as a local band and nothing special, but if you just play occasionally like Echo & The Bunnymen, then you're considered special.

At this moment Robyn is asked for his views on the "rock scene"

Robyn: It's going through a bad patch. I get a bit sick to death of this funk/disco thing. It would be nice if someone did something away from it.

AL: It comes down to being concerned with fashion rather than music doesn't it?

Dave: Fashion to a certain degree is quite exciting if done properly.

POEM!

WEST ONE (Rest In Peace)

Central London, lost alone
Carreasing silver pocketed in reflected stares
Shining taxis flash by at midnight,
Flickering the freezing water of sentinel streets.
Stranded, the thrills and kills of Saturday night,
Slide dazed into the lingering scent of moistured lips.

Hollow neon lights the deserted island;
Malcolm's lonely shadow descends.
For one moment his invisible dew
Materialises in the Strand.

I can see him standing with the street.
Uncontrolled, driving in all directions
Needing calm, finding it in foolish death.
Leaving, his voice drinks my liver;
Without the alcoholic haze
The romance dies with the dawn.

*IMPORTANT... To be read with the song
'Shine On Me' played in the background.
Do it and you'll SENSE the difference...
PETE BEYNON.

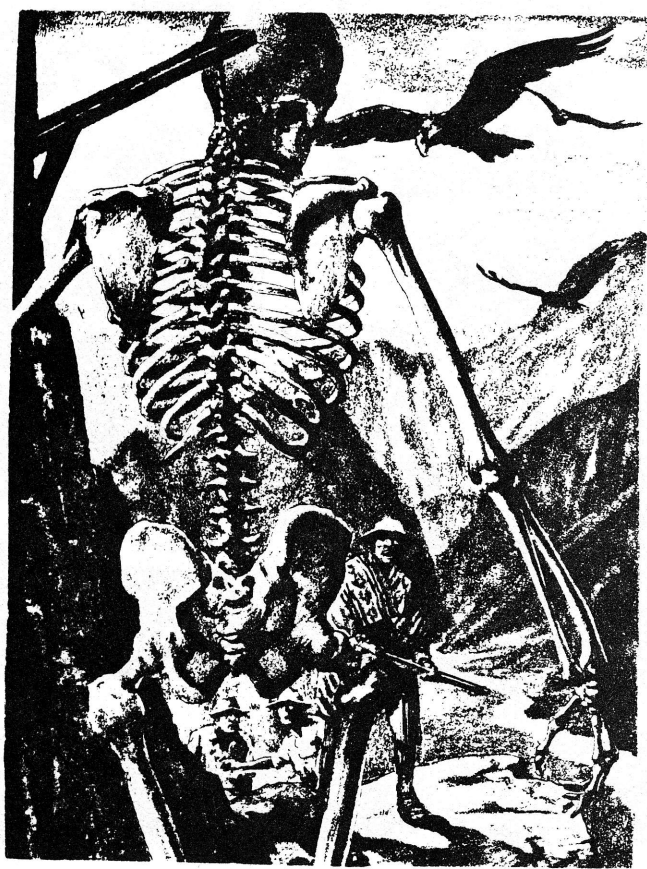
AL: Yes but playing to show off your new shirt.

Robyn: The music that goes with it has still got to be good. The thing is you can't say "nice shirt shame about the song".

AL: People are desperately looking in all sorts of places for something different but looking too hard and coming up with all sorts of rubbish.

Dave: I don't suppose there's ever been a period where you can say the music scene is great. The whole creative process comes out of being dissatisfied. If you look at the scene from one view, there are loads of good bands around at the moment but if you look at it in more broad terms then you've got things like Bucks Fizz.....

The Room are one of the good groups around at the moment in the mêlée of pseudo-culture gangsters (What? - Ed) and synthetic posters. They will be/ should be stars with their haunting and biting brand of pop.



MARK STEWART'S MANJA

With the emergence of ex Pop Group members in dance bands such as Rip Rig and Panic and Pigbag, many people have awaited the return of vocalist Mark Stewart who was probably the most essential element of the group. Well you'll be pleased to know that Mark has got some new material, a new band and is ready to make his long-awaited return.

His vocal style is still the same but the music seems far more adventurous compared to his past music.

Artificial Life talked to Mark on a rooftop somewhere in King's Cross to find out about his present activities and future plans.....

AL: Who exactly is in your new band?

MARK: Well, there's Bonjo on guitar and Charles Eskimo Fox on drums, who both play in Creation Rebel and The Freedom Fighters who back a lot of Jamaican musicians who play here such as Dillinger and Ranking Dread. There's a bass player Iver and a horns player and the producer Adrian Sherwood who is an essential part of the band.

AL: Have you got any records coming out?

MARK: We've got a single called 'Liberty City' coming out in September and an album in December.

AL: How did your present music come together?

MARK: I got disillusioned with a lot of things I'd done before and I saw Charlie playing drums for Ranking Dread in Bristol. It was the first time in ages that I'd seen anyone playing an instrument in a way I liked. I knew Adrian Sherwood and through him got in contact with the rest of the band. The music is more reggae based as I got bored with white boys playing disco or whatever.

AL: The music seems more disciplined than in the past.

MARK: Yes, it's more disciplined in the kind of music, which is based around reggae basslines and dub. We are also working on things like sound affects. I'm interested in going 'round collecting tapes of things like road grills and

railway engines, editing them together into a rhythm so that instead of a drum machine we could use a road drill, resulting in us using every day sounds rather than instruments!

AL: What are the songs about?

MARK: You can talk about specific songs; There's 'Liberty City' which is about what happens to people and how they cope with everyday problems. It's about people becoming disillusioned with what they're doing and shying away from trying to change things, instead going for a kind of security, through luxury and comfort which are escapes. This is a bad thing as I think people should keep on trying and stay true to their beliefs even if they can't see anything happening rather than going for money, security or hiding away in a relationship with somebody. A lot of people at 18 or 19 are really idealistic and think they can do something with their lives but then they come across a problem and they give in, turning to drink or drugs which they know isn't going to have any effect, they lie to themselves to keep their pride up.

AL: Do you think your lyrics offer any kind of hope?

MARK: I've got hope but not blind hope I've got hope if people just grab hold of something and never let go or give in... If people live a lie and pretend they're doing something when they're not then there isn't going to be any hope. There are so many intelligent people with a lot going for them who are wasting it because they can't see how to do something with the way they feel. They become side-tracked through music, writing or working and all their energy is put into false goals.

AL: By writing about it, do you think you're making people aware?

MARK: People are aware... All I'm doing is saying about it, maybe reassuring them and perhaps they



MARK STEWART.

can relate to it. If people face up to things and not turn a blind eye and be involved in a small world...their own world!

AL: There are lots of bands trying to help people by making them think and perhaps pushing them into facing up to things. Don't you think?

MARK: There are lots of people in bands that say things and that's what they'd really like but they are living in a dream world. If you're in a band and you think you are going to change people then that's pretty sick! Someone can't alter someone else, it's fascistic in that what they think is what other people should think.

AL: Do you think the experience of the Pop Group has taught you?

MARK: Yes...There were a lot of differences in that band. The final straw was the CND gig at Trafalger Square which some of the band didn't even want to play. The half-hearted enthusiasm shown by the band while I spent two months organising the music for the event resulted in the band splitting up. I didn't want to become involved in a band situation...dressing up in funny clothes and thinking I'm God's gift! When people become involved in a band situation they start thinking! It's like a psychological adolescent sex problem... It makes them want to be somebody which is as sick as possible. The good thing about the musicians I'm working with now is that they're older, normal and serious about the music and not concerned about dressing up.

The whole scene in London is disgusting, full of two-faced people who say what they're thinking and really they're just getting the cash from their record company. Any ideas that they had just go down the drain. Then they get into the idea of being musicians which is all

very well but you've got to have something to express.

AL: So, what's the answer...Staying as honest as possible and doing things on your own terms?

MARK: Yes and questioning yourself and keeping yourself in check all the time. I wouldn't do anything for a while because I thought it was all full of crap. Sometimes I think it's better if you spend time on your own to think and plan things.

AL: What do you think of the direction taken by ex Pop Group members?

MARK: It's nice music but it's not really saying anything! I'm not a musician so I don't see the point in getting up on stage and honking around on a saxophone. You can't really turn away from what's happening around you by jumping up and down in funny clothes listening to jazz records. What I like to hear, even without music, is someone getting up and saying what they believe in, even if I don't believe in it or agree with it...At least it's making you think!

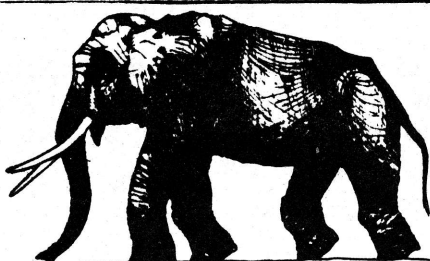
AL: I understand that you have some plans for playing unusual venues.

MARK: Yes definately. We're trying to get a gig in a church! The problem is that we're a new band starting out but as soon as we're established things will be a lot different. When we're in a position where we can do as we please then it's going to be hell on earth!

DUE OUT NEXT
SPRING IS A BOOK
ENTITLED "AN
IDEAL FOR LIVING"
which is a full
length history of
Joy Division/New
Order. The book
is going to be very
detailed and there-
fore essential
reading for fans
of the group.



THANKS TO THE
TYPISTS WHO
MADE THIS
FANZINE
POSSIBLE!





FUTURAMA 82

This year Futurama was held on an ice rink in the wilds of North Wales. The local natives looked bemused as the thousands of punks took over the little town of Queensferry. The facilities were terrible with no drink or food in the venue, resulting in the local chip shop and off-licence doing a roaring trade - rumour has it the owners have since retired!

The mixture of so called Futuristic bands had thier moments of excitement and boredom. There were so many ordinary bands who were plain boring that they're not worth mentioning.

On the Saturday The Alarm were the first enjoyable band with their acoustic and electric based protest songs creating a ripple of excitement. Despite the acoustic guitars, the band are very energetic and will continue to improve. There was a great deal of anticipation for Brilliant, Youths new band consisting of drums, key-boards, vocals, two basses and no guitars. The music is dancy with heavy rhythms and powerful vocals from Marcus. Brilliant's music represents the direction Killing Joke should have taken - it looks as if Youth will have the last laugh!

The melodic guitar style of Durutti Column's Vini Reilly is always nice but was not suitable to such a large venue.

New Order are of those special bands that continue to surprise and delight people with their music. Live, their performances have always varied but now they seem to have found themselves with Gillian's swirling keyboards, Hook's pulsating base, the hyperactive drumming of Morris and the subtle guitar and vocals of Albrecht. The crowd loved them and the band even played an encore.

To follow New Order is an impossible task, but the two man army of Blancmange tried and although their music contiues to improve, I'm not sure where it will get them.

Of course by Sunday morning you're feeling unwashed, tired, sick of the smell of greasy chips and piss ridden toilets but there was music to be heard!

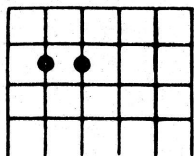
It's hard to categorise the music of Gene Loves Jezebel which means they're different and original. The band provide a swirling musical background for the visual side... Gene and Jezebel who with their storing Welsh voices and stage presence are able to captivate attention.

The real excitement of the day was the arrival of the Sex Gang Children along with their fire eating skeleton. The band played a storming set of favourites "Abyss", "Beasts", "Times of Our Lives", etc and certainly livened up the audience. Andi the singer stalking the stage, Rob's off beat drumming, Dave's heavy bass and Terry's manic guitar created music loud and proud! a celebration!

The hours ticked by as we waited for Southern Death Cult whose exciting music continues to improve and delight. The tribal drumming of Aky and Barry's distinctive bass lay the basis for Buzz's subtle guitar layers and Ian's strong vocals and stage movements drove the Cult fans into a frenzy. Again the band's classics "Apache", "Fatman", "Today", etc were played to perfection.

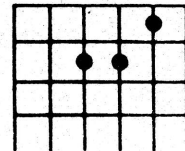
Following the Cult, the bands seemed drab, Dead or Alive were disappointing and The Damned, despite being good on record were just too loud - may be I'm getting old! The festival proved that there are two bands who mean something at this moment in time Sex Gang Children and Southern Death Cult - We've got faith.

0 2 3 0 0 0



XTC

0 2 3 1 0



This interview found Andy Partridge (lead singer/writer/guitarist of XTC) in his new house watching an Indian film on television. Earlier this year the band's UK tour was twice cancelled due to Partridge's recurring illness, amid rumours of a split in XTC's ranks. To discover whether these rumours were true and if XTC will ever tour again...

AL: In what direction do you see XTC's music going?

ANDY: The next album will have a lot of piano, sparser arrangements, love songs and more songs about abstract emotions. In general more towards 'folk' style, possibly South American music. I love it.

AL: You seem to like reggae/dub. Which do you feel of the groups songs come closest to sounding like the genuine article?

ANDY: I like the dub process but I hope we don't imitate their style of playing. As far as I'm concerned we are another type of genuine article.

AL: Bearing in mind your dislike of fashion because it 'disposes of people', what is your favourite item of clothing?

ANDY: Baggy clothes to allow for freedom of movement. Very clean, over-washed clothes are amongst favourites.

AL: How did you view rumours of an XTC split?

ANDY: All talk of split is wrong. Maybe those who would like to see us finish are the ones who talk of it most?

AL: How would you explain to a person who had never heard XTC's music what it's like and what you aim to achieve through it?

ANDY: It is basically music and songs in a pop format made by four individuals with very different tastes. We aim to be rich and anonymous and our songs loved for what they are.

AL: What are your views on the 1981 riots, the Falklands, car drivers and 'Sounds'.

ANDY: The 1981 riots?...If you have a bad spot on your skin it can sometimes become erupt and inflamed. The people were testing the police. If you act as though you have no self respect that's how other people would treat you.

The Falklands...England shows the world its tattoo. A lot of people die for 'seemingly' nothing. The news excited me. I followed it all. I wish they could have settled it with a football match though.

Car drivers...I would like to see horse transport come back. We can build cars that run on water now, but our oil based economy would collapse if we did. I will never drive—I think I was born to be chauffeured. Everyone drives twice as fast as they need to.

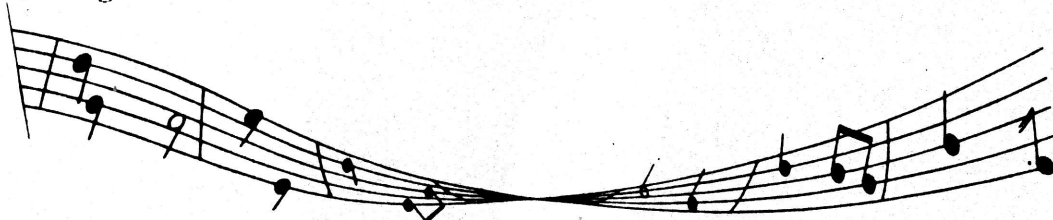
'Sounds'...Haven't read it for about a year now—nor any of the others. Smash Hits is the best..

AL: Do you like XTC's music being compared to the Beatles?

ANDY: I don't mind. It's a compliment but we don't try and copy anything they did.

AL: What prompted you to write 'Nearly Africa' and 'Knuckle Down'?

ANDY: 'Nearly Africa' was a song from 1975 called 'Primitive Desire'... My desire to go back to simple things—Don't let technology kidnap you away. 'Knuckle Down'...a plain and simple 'let's have more



understanding' type of song. I really wanted to write a 'chuggly' song as well.

AL: How soon do you think you will be able to tour again?

ANDY: I don't see us touring for a long time, if at all. We have a lot of time for other projects. Although I find it very exciting touring is a trap i.e. a chance for many leeches to suck from us. We have broken an old wheel.

AL: Why did Barry Andrews leave and do you have any regrets about his departure?

ANDY: I don't regret him leaving. He felt held under by me and to some extent Colin. He wrote songs which the other three of us thought sub-standard... Good lyrics though.

AL: Have you met any of the following people and if so what did you think of them?... Steve Strange; John Lydon; Boy George; Richard Branson; Paul Burnett; Betty Page; and Pete Shelley....

ANDY: Richard Branson—More money than sense... Reminds me of Bugs Bunny and I'm not sure if I like him or not.
Betty Page—Nice lass; That's it.
Pete Shelley—All I said was Hello.

AL: What do you think of people who charge £3 for G0 plus (Originally free with G02) and £7.50 for 3 DEP?

ANDY: They're bad.

AL: Finally—Are you short or long sighted?

ANDY: Short; I have been since I was little.

And so we leave Andy to his T.V. and to muse over the future of XTC.

XTC

